

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) praised the introduction of his Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act (H.R. 739) in the Senate by Virginia Senator Mark Warner today. This legislation passed the House of Representatives in both the 111th and 112th Congresses, and Wittman reintroduced it earlier this year as a continuation of his efforts to streamline and improve Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts.

“As Virginians, we understand the important role that the Chesapeake Bay plays in our Commonwealth: economically, environmentally, and culturally,” Wittman said. “This commonsense legislation will bring transparency to Bay restoration and ensure efforts and funds from the various entities involved are being harnessed effectively. I am pleased that Senator Warner has introduced the Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act in the Senate, and I am hopeful that it will see passage in both chambers and be signed into law.”

“The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure that is central to the culture and the economy of many coastal communities in Virginia and neighboring states. In order to be successful in our efforts to improve the health of the Bay, the different agencies and groups who share concerns about the Bay must do a better job of coordinating their efforts,” Senator Warner said. “By applying new performance-based measures, this legislation will help us ensure that the federal dollars being spent on Bay restoration activities produce real results. We must continue to focus on ways to make government work smarter and use the best tools and technology to analyze outcomes.”

Wittman has drawn heavily on his 23 years of experience as a water quality specialist in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to become a leader on Bay issues in Congress. His legislation would fully implement two cutting-edge management techniques, crosscut budgeting and adaptive management, to improve coordination and efficiency of Bay restoration efforts. These techniques have been utilized successfully in the Everglades and Great Lakes, but neither has been fully implemented in Bay restoration efforts, which have seen results lag far behind the billions of dollars spent. Wittman's legislation would also create a Chesapeake Bay Program Independent Evaluator to review and report to Congress on restoration activities in the watershed. To date, these efforts have been muddled due to the complexity of the various entities involved, including 10 federal agencies, six states and the District of Columbia, as well as over 1,000 localities and multiple non-governmental organizations. The Chesapeake Bay Accountability and Recovery Act has received endorsements from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Choose Clean Water Coalition, and the Virginia Seafood Council.

Congressman Rob Wittman, the Co-Chairman of the Congressional Chesapeake Bay Watershed Caucus, represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee, where he is a member of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs, and the Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals Resources.